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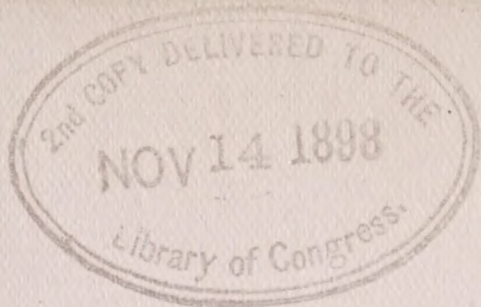
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KATIE  
A DAUGHTER OF THE KING



MARY A GILMORE





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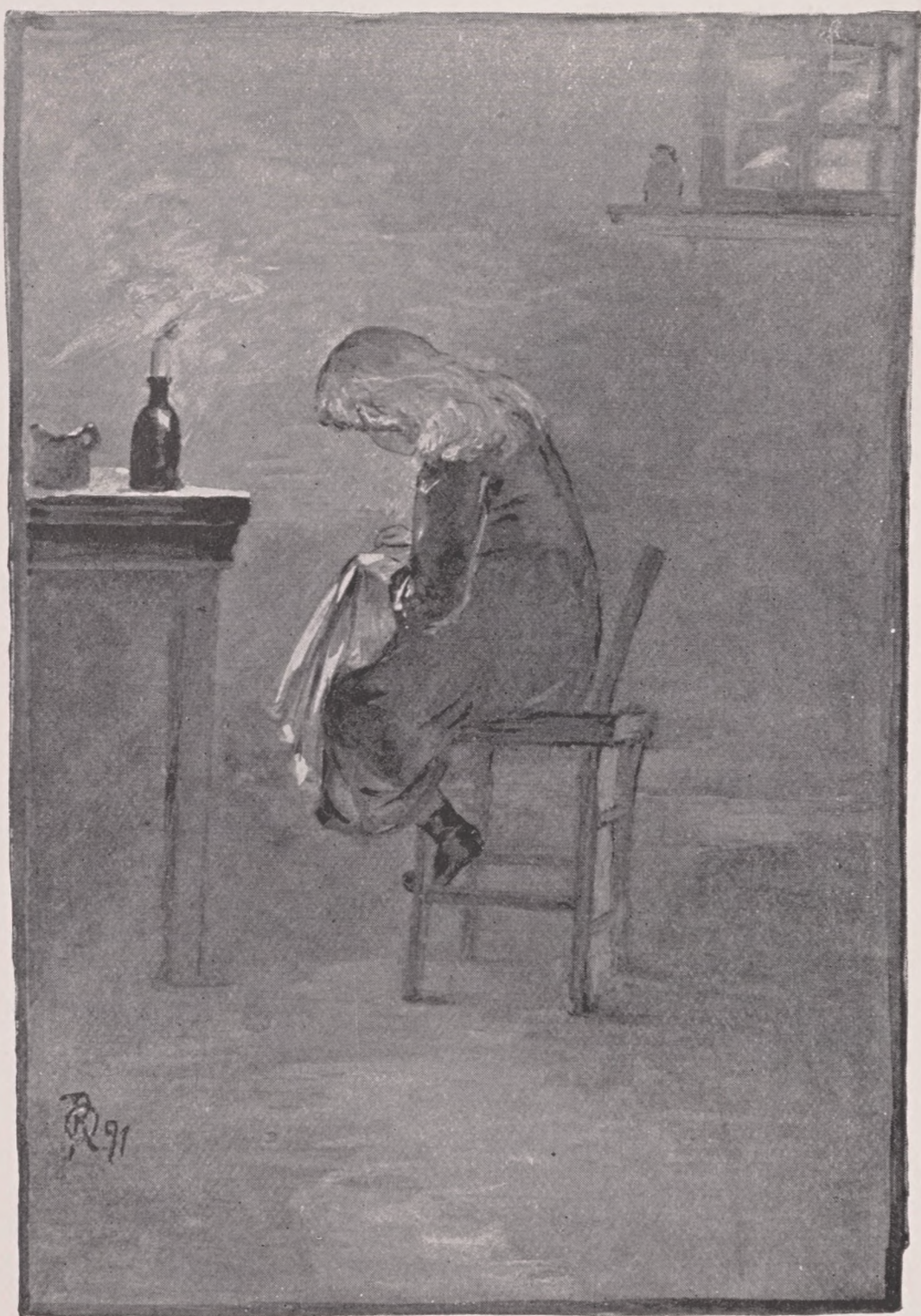














# KATIE

A DAUGHTER OF THE KING







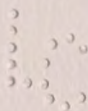
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# KATIE

A DAUGHTER OF THE KING

BY

MARY A. GILMORE



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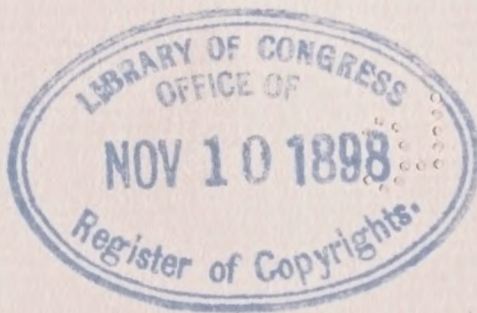


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## NOTE.

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THIS story of A DAUGHTER OF THE KING was originally published in "The Churchman," and by the kind permission of the editors, is now issued in the present form, in the hope that it may continue to recall to the King's daughters that in all our towns and cities there are many little heirs of poverty and suffering to whom the thought of another heritage may bring a happiness such as their more fortunate sisters are scarcely able to realize.

M. A. G.







# KATIE,

## A DAUGHTER OF THE KING.



### CHAPTER I.

THE bell of the Episcopal mission-chapel was clanging harshly as Miss Winthrop passed into the porch beneath it. The bell was cracked, and called the congregation with a sharp, hoarse voice; but it performed its duty as faithfully as any of its sweeter-toned neighbors, if not as acceptably to the ear of a carping public. Miss Winthrop sighed and looked anxious, as she approached her class of girls, — for two reasons: she was a very delicate little woman whose zeal was fast outrunning her strength; and her girls were about as uninteresting, and to all appearances about as unreciprocative, a lot as ever fell to religious instructor. To-day, however, a surprise awaited her. Beside one of



the youngest and poorest (they were all of a hard-working class) sat a new-comer, — a thin little creature, whose face attracted irresistibly by its contrast to her dress and surroundings. Her features were regularly formed, and the unhealthy whiteness of her face was redeemed by a pair of big black eyes that looked out with a half-frightened, half-wondering gaze, pitiful to see in one so young; but the chief attraction was her hair, — a mass of golden floss that had evidently defied any effort of brush or comb, and stood out like a halo all around the little head.

“What is your name, my dear?” Miss Winthrop asked.

The child rubbed one ragged boot against the other, drew up one shoulder, and after a shy glance at Miss Winthrop, turned her eyes appealingly to her friend, who answered briskly: —

“She’s Katie, ma’am; she ain’t ever been to a place like this before, and wanted to come with me.”

“I’m glad to see you; I hope you’ll like it,” Miss Winthrop said cordially.



The child's shyness melted under the genial reception.

"I came more for Sally than for me," she said, with a bright touch of color rising on her cheeks.

"Who is Sallie?"

"Sallie? why, she's the girl I live with. I take care of her. Her aunt is away sewing all day, and Sallie and I keep house. She is lame, and don't walk any; so I go out and see things, and then go back and tell Sallie, and it's 'most as good, she says, as if she saw them."

"You must make her very happy."

"Pr'aps; but you ought to hear the stories Sallie tells! She makes 'em up right out of her own head, and tells 'em to me."

The child had forgotten her diffidence; her desire to describe the unknown Sallie had made herself sink into nonentity.

"And you take all the care of her?" Miss Winthrop asked, wonderingly. It was no new thing in her experience for young girls to mind the house and take care of babies; but this child looked hardly more than a baby herself.



"Yes 'm; that's what I'm there for. If I did n't take care of her and keep house, Aunt Abby Ann would send me to the 'sylum. She is n't my aunt, she's Sallie's," as Miss Winthrop looked mystified.

"Why, what is your name?"

"Just Katie; I ain't got any other. They found me in the street one night when I was a baby, and took me in. Sallie's mother was livin' then, and she would n't send such a mite away, she said, — that was me, ma'am; and when she died she asked Aunt Abby Ann to keep me, 'cause Sallie would be lonesome without somebody. I don't think she likes to, — I'm 'one more mouth to feed,' she says," — the tiny mouth quivered as Katie made this confession; "but I could n't bear to leave Sallie, and she says it would kill her if I should go; so I work as hard as I can to pay for my keeps."

The white, earnest little face glowed eloquently as she spoke of Sallie; but as she concluded with the slight reference to the "hard things at home," it contracted sharply, and that pitiful, wondering expression came to her eyes, as if the great questions of life that are left



generally — thank God — for grown folk to grapple with, had been ever present with this child. Miss Winthrop's eyes filled. Resolving to learn more of the waif cast up at her door, she drew the wandering attention of her class to a plan she hoped might appeal to them now and remain with them, perchance, through the week. This was the description of one of those helpful societies lately sprung up in the land, called "The Daughters of the King," and the proposition that they should form one of the bands of ten.

"Katie will just make our tenth," she added, kindly, to the child beside her. It was some time before she could make them thoroughly understand the object. They could pledge themselves to correct some special sin, or devote their energies to some special act of charity; the only requisite was that whatever they did should be done for God himself, a direct act of love as from a daughter to a father, the motto being: "In His Name." If it involved some sacrifice, so much the better; indeed, that was the principal idea, — a giving up, a preferring of one another "In His Name."



So much discussion ensued that Miss Winthrop despaired of their ever being agreed upon one aim. At length one of the girls suggested that each should pledge herself to do some special thing known only to herself, and then Christmas day they could meet and compare notes. Miss Winthrop hesitated.

"It is not like anything I've ever heard of in this connection," she objected; "the help is in the idea of mutual work and support."

"But it says, 'Whatsoever ye do, do it in my name,'" pleaded another, "does n't it? so I don't see what difference it makes."

"Perhaps not," Miss Winthrop assented; "we'll try it if you like, though it seems hardly the right way to work."

To tell the truth, she was so pleased that she had at last struck a chord of interest that she was willing to let them try the plan as they liked, and they went away filled with the new idea, and with quite a degree of interest in the silver crosses fastened with royal purple ribbon, and marked "In His Name," which Miss Winthrop promised them on the next Sunday.



"Is it over?" Katie asked, as the children filed out of the room after the closing exercises.

Miss Winthrop had watched her intently all through the service; the child's eyes had never left her face while she was speaking, and often her lips had moved as if she were learning a lesson, or repeating Miss Winthrop's words. While the children sang she gazed about, not in open-mouthed wonder, Miss Winthrop noticed, as is the general manner of little waifs from the street, but with an intelligent air, as if she were taking in all she possibly could of the building and people in it; and Miss Winthrop could see that she cast shy glances at the girls' dresses, looking back upon her own, which bloomed out in patches of the original color of the cloth, in brilliant contrast to the dingy and faded ground of the garment. She leaned forward till the mass of fluffy hair, falling in a golden veil upon her shoulders, hid her face from the lady, who felt, nevertheless, that the child was looking now at the row of feet along the floor. Involuntarily Miss Winthrop drew in her neatly fitting, thick-soled walking-boot; though it was



not her best, she felt that it would show a cruel contrast to the torn leather covering that poorly concealed the daintily shaped foot within. She had a very tender conscience, this little woman, and for the hundredth time she felt accused that her own feet should be so comfortably shod when so many little ones went almost bare.

Katie sighed, and drew in her feet; next her eyes sought Miss Winthrop's hands, which were gloved, and her own, bare and already roughened and reddened by labor, but delicate and as finely formed as any child's could be. She hid them under the corner of a little fringed shawl that she wore about her shoulders, and let her gaze wander to a memorial window that rose at her right.

"Is it over?" she had asked, wistfully.

"It is for now," Miss Winthrop answered; "but," hoping to draw a little more confidence from her, "stay a few minutes with me, and tell me how you like it. What do you think of our plan? Did you quite understand it?" for Katie's eyes met hers with a perplexed, questioning look.



"Not quite, ma'am," she said, adding, apologetically, "I've never been to a place like this before, and I would like to know more, so as to tell Sallie. I didn't know we had a king. Where does he live; and does he wear a crown?"

"Oh, my dear!"

Was it possible in these evangelizing days there lived a child who had never heard of the King of kings? But it was an easy task to tell of Him to this little one, who, she found, did know of Him, but only as a God who lived in the sky. It made her realize with what a force the knowledge, so common as to be unappreciated by many of us, would come to one for the first time, as the pale little woman watched the pale little child opposite her, and told in a few graphic words the story of the Wonderful Life of eighteen hundred years ago. Katie listened intently, as she heard of the birth at Bethlehem. Her interest never flagged as the incidents of that holy life were touched upon, and when the dark end began to lower the little mouth twitched.

"They killed Him, and all His mother and



friends could do was to stand by and see Him suffer."

Miss Winthrop was startled by the sudden grasp of the claw-like hand.

"Don't make it end so," the child begged; "don't let Him die. It's such a pretty story; but we don't like bad endings — Sallie and I."

"But, my dear, I can't help it; it's a true story."

"Truly?"

"Yes, every word; but that's not the end," and she went on to finish the story of that short Life, whose influence has lasted through the long centuries.

"And was He the King?"

"Yes, and you must try to think always that you are one of His daughters."

A bright smile flitted across the child's face.

"It's nice to know I'm somebody's daughter," she said, with unconscious pathos. "I'll think of that till I find my mother; Sallie says maybe I'll find her some day."

"That is just the difference, dear, — you may never find her; but you can't help being a daughter of the King — we all are."



“Everybody? Is Sallie?”

“Yes, indeed; why, Sallie’s very name means ‘a princess.’”

“Say it again; I want to tell her that. I thought kings and their children were all dressed beautiful, and never were hungry, nor had to work, nor wear torn clo’es.”



## CHAPTER II.

“**T**HAT is the difference between an earthly king and this one. No matter how poor, or sick, or tired, or plagued we are, we must try to be patient and cheerful, knowing it is something He wants us to do, and some day we will know why. We may not be able to give Him money; but we can give Him our patient, willing service, and try to find opportunities to do good to somebody worse off than ourselves, and that will be doing something “In His Name,” — something that He specially likes. He was poor Himself, you remember, when He came here a little baby, and I think the worse off His children are, the more He must love them. Now, dear, we must go. Tell me once more where you live, and I’ll try to come to see you this week.”

The sun shone through a rosy pane of glass and turned to burnished gold the soft hair



hanging about the white little face; it was raised with touching confidence to the woman as they went out together.

“Does n’t it — does n’t this,” she stammered, pointing to the dingy gown that the cool autumn wind wrapped around her slight figure, “make any difference? Are you sure the King would n’t mind seeing a daughter of His like this?”

Something blurred Miss Winthrop’s vision a little — the wind was quite sharp.

“Quite sure,” she said; “you may be satisfied that He understands all about it.”

“Thank you,” Katie said; “Sallie’ll be so glad to hear it. I must go this way; it’s getting late, and she’ll worry. Good-by, ma’am,” and the tiny figure flew around the corner, and disappeared so suddenly that Miss Winthrop was fairly amazed.

“I feel as if I’d been entertaining an angel unawares,” she said to herself. “The King’s daughter, all glorious within — how could I explain that to such a baby? Yet she seemed to understand everything, — she must be something out of the common run of children. She



is no child of the slums, and she said she was a foundling. Whom does she remind me of? I must surely see her this week."

But alas! by another Sunday Miss Winthrop was lying upon a weary bed of illness, and this good resolve, with many others, had to be laid aside indefinitely.

The rosy gray of the autumn day was fast deepening with the setting sun as Katie reached the bare rooms that she called home. Impetuously she burst open the door, and a ray of golden light illumined the room. Immediately, also, multitudes of small, colored papers, and snips of recent cuttings rose on the breeze made by her entrance, and filled the air with a confused mass of color.

"Oh, Katie, see what you 've done!" wailed a plaintive voice—such a tired little voice! such a weary-looking little body!

Sallie lay upon an old lounge in the brightest corner of the dark room, surrounded by sheets of brilliantly colored paper, and fashioning from them bunches of gay roses, scarlet poppies, and carnations that fairly rivalled nature. Propped up here day after day Sallie lay, her fingers



making up by their ceaseless activity for the enforced idleness of the rest of her crippled body.

Katie looked at the confusion in dismay for a minute, then she said, —

“Wait, and they’ll settle; what’s the use of going after ’em? Never mind ’em anyway. Sallie, what do you think I’ve heard?”

“I don’t know, — something long, I guess. I thought you’d never come.”

“Sallie, what do you think, I joined a ’ciety! — and it’s the ‘Daughters of the King!’”

“Is it the same as the ‘Daughters of Rebecca’? what Mrs. Rounds belongs to?” Sallie asked with interest.

“No, not at all!” this with pronounced scorn. “Oh, I can’t begin to tell you! It’s like your stories, Sallie, only it’s all true. You and I and everybody are the ‘Daughters of the King.’”

“It’ll take lots of pretending to play that, Katie,” Sallie remarked, gravely.

“It’s more than a pretend, — it’s true!” and with breathless haste Katie repeated, almost



word for word, all she had heard that day. Talking so fast and earnestly herself, she did not notice the subdued excitement in Sallie's eyes, till as she paused for breath a moment, the little creature beside her cried, —

“I always knew it; I always said so, Katie. You are a princess really! You know you are different from the rest of us, and now somebody else has said so.”

Katie looked puzzled.

“Miss Winthrop said this kind was different; it did n't mean rich folks, — anybody, everybody was the King's daughter, — only some didn't know it and some did n't care. You are, same as me, Sallie.”

“I?” A look of pitiful ridicule passed over the child's face as she glanced at her old dress and the crippled leg that it barely hid.

“Yes, she said your name meant ‘princess,’ too; now what can we do for the King, you know? They were going to keep it a secret, but you and I need n't.”

“I think it's a mistake, Katie; the King could never have meant me for a daughter, else He'd have made me whole; but it's just what



I always knew you were," and she reached out her poor little hand and drew a lock of Katie's shining hair caressingly through her fingers.

"No," Katie insisted; "she said no matter how sick or poor, — and she thought He loved those best."

"But what could I do?"

"I don't know, Sallie, I'm sure. If we could find somebody poorer than us; but I don't believe Aunt Abby Ann would let us give away our supper or dinner, even if it ain't much anyway."

The two little figures sat perfectly quiet in the falling twilight, whose kindly dark was unable to cover the exceeding bareness of the room. One stretched on the hard old couch, with limbs twisted and body racked by much suffering; the other perched uncomfortably by her side, drawing the little shawl about her shoulders and hugging her knees in an effort to keep both ends warm at once, these two little far-away daughters of the King bent all their childish energies, sharpened by want and suffering to womanly wit, to find an



acceptable offering to the Sovereign of the world.

Their meditations were brought to an abrupt end by the entrance of an angular woman, whose eyebrows were uplifted and the corners of her mouth drawn down in a perpetually querulous expression; even her nose expressed the same general dissatisfaction, and raised itself with an air of protest. Katie hurriedly collected the scattered papers. If Aunt Abby Ann made no verbal complaint, her "uncomfortable" manner spoke volumes, and she could not bear to see the room "cluttered up." Poor woman, she lived up to her light, as old-fashioned folk say; but her light was a dim one, and a hard fight to keep body and soul together had almost entirely extinguished it. Her neighbors remonstrated with her for keeping the two children. The Asylum was a vague and mysterious retreat that she herself often held over their heads when she was more perplexed and irritated than usual; but in spite of the extra expense, she was not really hard-hearted enough to send away her sister's crippled child; and as for the other, she knew



she was doing a good thing by herself in keeping Katie to care for Sallie and "mind the house" (for the child did all of a woman's work) during her long twelve hours' absence from home when she toiled with her needle.



## CHAPTER III.

ALL through the week the children dwelt upon the new idea; the story related by Katie had surpassed in interest any of Sallie's own inventions, and was eagerly seized by this strange child, who at once proceeded to elaborate it. It seemed as if the law of compensation had given to Sallie's mind a wonderful force of imagination to make up for the lack of vigor of her body. Lying day after day on the hard couch in the small bare room absolutely devoid of any beauty, this tiny, white-faced child changed like a magician, with her wand of marvellous imagination, everything that was bare and cold and grimy into warm, bright, and fantastic surroundings. Until now one of the favorite themes of her "pretending" had been Katie's future possibilities. The manner of her advent among them — it was nine years now since Katie had come to live with her, and



they were both about two when she had been found — appealed strongly to Sallie. The fact that everything worn by her pointed, though vaguely, to her having been lost out of luxurious surroundings, the exquisite delicacy of her flesh, preserved through common fare and hard work, even the finer and glossier texture of Katie's hair were all conclusive proofs to Sallie that Katie was a very different creature from herself, perhaps a princess in disguise, whose parents and kingdom would eventually be found, waiting to restore her to her proper place. This was one of the reasons why the story of the King's daughter appealed so strongly to her fancy; it might be true, as Katie had insisted, that she too was one; but in any case there was no doubt about Katie, and at once they began to "pretend." The little room no longer bounded their existence, — it was one of a long suite, — and at dusk, when it was too late to work over the paper flowers, they were put aside, and the "princesses," lying in state upon their couch, called for lights, and watched the stars as they came out one by one.



"It seems to me the 'tendants are a long time lighting up to-night," Katie ventured.

"You forget how large the palace is," Sallie returned, severely.

"They don't seem to make very much light, either."

Katie's imagination was more limited; it could not always keep pace with her sister princess's.

"The King is not here, to-night, and of course we don't have so much light till He comes."

"When is he coming?"

"I don't know; I think, maybe, by Christmas. Did n't you say Miss Winthrop told you He came then?" Princess Sara asked, coming to realities abruptly.

"She said He did once; but He came then a little baby. I don't believe He'd come that way now. Have you thought what to do for Him?"

"No; I tell you, Katie, there's a mistake, — if I was His daughter, really, He'd tell me what to do. I wish we knew more about it. Why do you s'pose that lady has n't been to the palace?"



"Maybe she forgot the way. I'll find out more next Sunday; but it's long to wait."

"Yes, sometimes I think I won't have time enough."

"Why, what do you mean?" Katie asked, her eyes big with alarm.

"I get so tired, now-a-days, and I can't sit up as long as I could; maybe by and by I can't any."

"Do you mean you might get worse and go —" Katie stammered over the hard words.

Sallie nodded slowly.

"Yes, it seems queer to think of it; but I can't do much but think of things, you know and somehow, lately, I've thought I might never grow up like other folks. I could n't with this, anyway," and she touched the twisted limb softly.

"There, Katie, don't feel bad, — maybe I'll get stronger instead;" for the golden head had sunk lower and lower, and the tiny frame beside her was shaken with hard internal sobs, as Katie, young in years, but womanly of intuition where the child of her childish maternity was



concerned, heard expressed in words for the first time what had been like a dark shadow before her for many weeks. It seems an unnatural talk for children; but these little "prisoners of poverty" are aged unnaturally always; and thrice welcome should bodily weakness and isolation be, if it result in preserving any degree of childish innocence.

The time did seem long till Sunday, and a grievous disappointment awaited Katie when, having gone to the mission room with courage raised to the sticking-point, and fully resolved to ask several perplexing questions of the genial woman, there appeared, not Miss Winthrop, but a tall stately lady, whose dress of heavy black increased her height and stateliness and a general forbidding air that surrounded her like an atmosphere. Katie, whose shyness only thawed under very sunny conditions, shrank into a corner and dared not open her lips. She fixed her dark eyes on the lady, however, with a gaze that allowed not a single item to escape.

"She looks like a princess," Katie thought; "I wonder if she is a daughter of the King. Her mouth is proud, but her eyes are sorry.



She looks as if she could be nice if she would, but she would n't."

The lady spoke just then. Her voice was clear and cold as a distant bell on a frosty morning. Miss Winthrop, she explained, was very ill; she might never be any better, though of course they hoped she would. She had sent them the ten little silver crosses marked "I. H. N.," with her love, and hoped that by Christmas they would have very good results to tell. Then she asked them to read the lesson, which, curiously enough, was the forty-fifth Psalm. The girls smiled as they read, "The King's daughter is all glorious within." The tall lady saw that Katie had no Bible, and handed her her own. As Katie shyly reached out her hand to take it, the movement brought a mass of golden hair over her arm. The child's dark eyes, fixed steadily on the woman, saw a startled expression come over the latter's face; it was gone in an instant, but the lady's hand trembled a little as she gave the book, and she did not speak for several minutes.

Katie could read very little. She held the elegantly bound Bible, with a silver clasp and a



silver cross, on her knees and *arcely* dared touch it. She listened closely to the reading, however, hoping to find her information through it, if not through Miss Winthrop.

When the crosses were given out only one was handed her, and the disappointment of not having one for Sallie was so great that Katie was almost impelled to ask for it. Three times she tried, but every time she looked at the stately lady she found the cold, dark eyes—curiously like her own, if she had but known it—fixed in their turn steadily upon her now, and the shy child shrank behind her veil of golden hair. But her grief broke forth when she reached home, and showing Sallie the little cross, was obliged to confess that there was none for her. Sallie received the news, Katie thought, with apathy; but she found that it was because she, too, had something to communicate.

“We’ve got to move,” Sallie said. “Aunt Abby Ann says the ‘Works’ are going over the river, and she can’t walk four miles a day back and forth, and she can’t pay car-fare, either; so we’ve got to move.”



“Then we sha’n’t hear any more about the King?”

“Yes, we shall; you’ve got the cross, and maybe Christmas you can come back and hear what they’ve done.”

Though it created a diversion, the flitting across the great city did not take away the absorbing idea from the children. Indeed, after they were once settled, it became evident that the actual field of little Sallie’s interest was more and more limited to her immediate surroundings, and in proportion to the narrowing of her bodily limitations her mental activity increased with feverish impetus. The room that her time was spent in now was in the third story of a moderately good tenement house. It was newly built on what was only a few years back a country road, and with more care than is generally shown a few of the many and lofty trees had been spared. It was with some difficulty that they got Sallie up the long stairs; but as they opened the door and laid her on the old lounge placed directly beside the window the little sufferer gave a long sigh of delight.



"Oh, Katie," she whispered, squeezing the other's hand, "it's a golden palace."

Katie looked up and nodded.

Aunt Abby Ann heard the words, and laughed grimly to herself as she pulled out the bare table, and set on it the bread and tea for supper.

"If they take any comfort in it, let 'em," she said to herself; but her mood softened as she saw Sallie's thin little face with such a contented smile on it. The child lay back on her lounge and looked out of the window. Two tall trees, a maple and a willow, towered up over a neighboring cottage, waving in the cool autumn breeze. The rays of the setting sun turned into gold the mass of gorgeous yellow leaves, and the reflection filled the room with the golden light.

"See them! see them!" cried Sallie; "see them bend their heads! See the green tree with the little, long leaves! They say, 'We're glad to see you, glad to see you, Katie and Sallie.'" She nodded her head gravely at them, and an extra gust of wind blew the graceful willow almost down to the window. Sallie



fairly clapped her hands. "I sha'n't be lonesome now when you 're out, Katie," she said; "they'll keep me company."

They talked often now of the new play. One day, while they were busily at work on the paper flowers (try as she would, Sallie could not make as many in a day as she used to — the wires were so heavy), Sallie said, —

"Hand me some red paper for the jacks, Katie; it's in the big book."

Katie took the old, leather-covered family Bible, that had escaped, chiefly through its battered and mildewed condition, the fate of being sold at a pawn-broker's, — and took out the sheet of red paper. She gave a little scream.

"Why, Sallie, here it is! here's the very book they read about the daughter of the King in, the other day. There! read it," and she pointed to the words, "She shall be brought unto the King in raiment of needle-work."

"We might have known it would be in there, — that's the book that tells about God, and He was the King, was n't He?" asked Sallie. "We've been foolish, we might have thought



of it before." The two cuddled close together, forgetting the flowers, as they spelled out laboriously the long words: —

"The daughter of Tyre shall be there with a gift."

"The King's daughter is all glorious within: her clothing is of wrought gold. She shall be brought unto the King in raiment of needlework: the virgins, her companions that follow her, shall be brought unto thee. With gladness and rejoicing shall they be brought; they shall enter into the King's palace."

The "King's daughter," that was plain; but who was "the daughter of Tyre?"

Sallie sighed softly. "That must be me," she said; "I'm always tired. I think that's me; but what is the gift?"

"That was what we were to do, Miss Winthrop said," Katie explained briefly; "whatever we did 'in His name,' would be a gift to Him."

"'All glorious within; her clothing is all wrought gold,' — ours is n't, is it, Katie?" Sallie said, laughing. "Oh, would n't you like to have a dress all gold, and soft furs to wear around



your neck? See here!" she went on, reading from the book.

"'Hearken, O daughter, and consider, and incline thine ear; forget also thine own people and thy father's house.' Why, Katie, that's what you've done! You are a daughter of the King especially; it all says so. What are you thinking about?" for Katie was unusually still.

"The gift; she said if we gave to anybody poor and sick it was like giving to Him."

Sallie dropped the heavy book, and looked up at the yellow maple; she got tired so quickly, as she said. Her face grew very thoughtful, and the dark lines grown blacker lately under her eyes were clearly pencilled.

"Would you really like a dress with gold in it?" Katie asked, wistfully. Sallie had seemed so indifferent lately that any wish of this sort was grasped eagerly by her little mother.

She nodded vaguely.

"Maybe I'll have it when I go to the King's palace," she said. "Katie, you know what we were talking about the other day? well, I think I sha'n't be here very long —"



But Katie interrupted her with a wild cry: "Don't, don't! it hurts! Where shall I go? what shall I do without you?"

Sallie patted the tangled mass of golden hair before her.

"Your hair is like what is said about the clothing: it is wrought gold; Katie, stop! would you miss me so much? Don't cry so." Suddenly an excited light shone in her eyes. "Katie, I've thought what to do. Stop, Katie! I tell you I've thought what to do 'in His name.'"

"What is it!" Katie asked, still sobbing.

"I can't tell you now; but if you'll help me sell all the flowers I can make, I think I can do something splendid."

"I wish you could think of something for me to do, too," Katie said, with full confidence in the power of her companion.

If self-denial was a part of the task, it was a shame that she could not have realized how nobly she was working "in His name," for, out of her love for the little cripple, she bravely took the basket of paper flowers every day, and did her best to sell them, in spite of the shyness



that made her dread to accost a stranger, and the innate delicacy and pride that made her ashamed to go on the street looking such a scare-crow in the old, faded, shrunken clothes. At the store where they regularly bought the flowers it was not so bad; but nothing but the love of Sallie ever gave her courage to enter the others, or ask passers-by to purchase. While she toiled in this way Sallie at home worked with feverish haste, till exhausted she would lie back on the lounge and watch the trees, talking to them as to human beings. To them she confided the hard secret whose realization was beginning to be too much to be hidden in the little breast.

“I don’t think I’ll see you all green in the spring,” she said, as the yellow leaves tossed in the golden sun; “the pain in my back is so bad; but if I can only find Katie’s mother for her I sha’ n’t mind the rest. Poor Katie; she’d be so lonesome without me all day, and I’m afraid Aunt Abby Ann would send her to the ‘sylum.’”

To them she confided her plan. A little clasp such as babies wear had fastened Katie’s



dress when they found her, years ago. On it were the letters "K. Le R." She and Katie had puzzled over them many times, and her mother had depended on them to identify the child; but notwithstanding, all search for her parents had been in vain. What the last name was, they could only conjecture; Katie could remember nothing but the first. Now, on the inner petal of every rose, where it could be seen by a close observer, but did not hurt the flower, Sallie, with painstaking toil, traced these letters, and beneath them the name of the street on which she lived. They had to be written very distinctly, but much work on the flowers had made Sallie's touch delicate, and if one took the trouble to look into the rose he could not fail to read its message.

"There!" she exclaimed, triumphantly, as a bunch of the flowers was prepared; "if Katie's mother should happen to see that, she'll take the trouble to find out what it means, won't she?" and the little girl looked up at the tall trees confidently.

Stirred by a big breeze, the maple shook its thousand yellow leaves in a maddening whirl



above the window that sent them floating down like a shower of gold.

“ You do know ; you are laughing about it, are n't you ? ” cried the child, stretching out her arms. “ Oh, it must be nice to be up there. But I must go to work ; I must do lots of these, so they 'll go out everywhere.”

But the tired hands refused to do much more work ; the heavy eyes closed in spite of her determination, and the ache in the poor little back became so constant, that at last the papers were too heavy a load to bear, and nothing remained but to lie and watch the trees and weave long fantastic stories of a king's palace between the intervals of pain. She questioned Katie every day closely as to who had bought the flowers, and her wonderful memory could have told her weeks after, just what looking people had the messages within their grasp. It was strange that Katie did not notice it, but the child's mind was occupied with other things just now. The vague fear of losing Sallie was ever with her ; she felt that all her energies must be devoted to her, and it was with mingled pleasure and pain that she resolved that what-



ever she did 'in His name' should be done for the other daughter of the King.

"If I could only give her a clothing wrought with gold," she sighed, and one night when Aunt Abby Ann was doing some extra work, a bit of nice embroidery that had been ordered, Katie, attracted by the skeins of golden floss, drew near, and asked timidly what those would cost.

"Twenty-five or thirty cents," Aunt Abby Ann answered.

Katie sighed ; it might just as well have been twenty-five or thirty dollars.

"Why?" the woman asked, not unkindly; "do you want some? If there's any left you can have it."

Katie watched the work with breathless eagerness. She drew a long breath at every needleful that Aunt Abby Ann drew out, and by the time the work was finished her habit of keen observation cultivated on Sallie's behalf had taught her just the manner of working. Quite a large bunch of the silk was left. Katie received it joyfully; the color came into her cheeks, and Aunt Abby Ann realized what a



pretty child easier circumstances would have made. The first step in her cherished plan having been taken, Katie bravely essayed another.

"How much cloth would it take to make a garment?" she asked.

Aunt Abby Ann paused in the midst of folding up her work.

"Depends who it's for and what kind," she said, briefly.

"For Sallie, or — me," Katie stammered; she did so want to keep her plan a secret from Aunt Abby Ann's practical comments.

"Heaven's sake, child!" the hard-working woman cried, "what's in your head now? You need n't set your mind on anything new this winter; Sallie's got enough to keep her warm, as long as she lies abed, and you'll have to make your old coat go; it's all I can do now, after this moving, to pay the rent and get food for us; how they expect a woman to live on a dollar a day I don't see; I'd like them that gets rich on our work to try it awhile. You've got enough to keep warm, haven't you?" she asked, kindly, for the child's sober face could not fail to touch her a little.



"Yes, if I run," Katie said, in a matter-of-fact tone. "It's only when you walk slow that the cold bites, generally."

"What sort of a garment did you mean?" Aunt Abby Ann pursued, curiously.

"A — a — skirt," Katie said, desperately. She had not really much idea what a "garment" was.

"If you get cotton it would take about a yard and a half, and would cost fifteen cents, perhaps; flannel would be more."

Katie's face brightened. She had saved with much self-denial just sixteen cents out of the money that Sallie insisted she should take from the profits of the flowers, one cent in every five; Katie would take no more than that. She went to bed with a happy heart, and the next day, after disposing of the regular bunch of roses, she went into a small thread and needle store, and got her cotton cloth. She must next get it into the house without Sallie's seeing it. Then how could she ever make it? She had mended enough, poor child, but original material rarely came to her hands. Before she reached the house she slipped off her shawl, took the cloth



out of its wrapping, folded it over her shoulders, and the shawl over it; then she walked into the room, and after stopping a moment to speak to Sallie, hid it in the drawer of an old bureau in the farther room. She fashioned the skirt that night after Aunt Abby Ann had gone and Sallie had been carefully put to bed, — she went very early, now ; the hard old mattress and the thin blankets felt so good to the little frame that seemed to become weaker every day. Katie looked very sober as she cut the cloth and sewed it up as nearly as possible like an old skirt of Sallie's. Sallie had not even spoken of the princesses or the King that day, and just before going to bed she had made such a strange remark: —

“They beckon,” she told Katie; “I mean the trees; I think that long one,” pointing to the willow just outlined in the dusk, “comes a little nearer every day.”

Her eyes were very bright and her cheeks flushed. Aunt Abby Ann had asked her how she felt, very kindly, that night, and muttered something about the doctor as she went out. Katie worked with a heavy heart, but her fingers



flew; she was anxious to get to the gold. All the time her mind was on the words: "Her clothing is of wrought gold; she shall be brought to the King in raiment of needle-work." If she could only finish it by Christmas, how pleased Sallie would be; it would make the play seem so real, and Sallie did so love to pretend — it was all that made her forget the pain. Work as she might, however, she could not "get to the gold" to-night; it must wait for another time, and for the next few days Sallie seemed brighter. All the morning she worked at the flowers, while Katie "did up the work;" then when the child had gone out to sell them, Sallie lay back and rested, thinking, thinking, thinking. First, she thought of Katie — how good and kind to her she always was; "my little mother" she called the child who had grown up with her. If the flowers would only bring Katie's mother; if the King, who, she had been told, knew everything, knew how hard she had tried to do something for Him through one of His children, surely he would let the flowers go to the right one. It was the best she could do — almost helpless on the old



lounge; poor as any one could be who had just enough to keep from being cold and hungry; perhaps there were some worse off—but she could n't reach them, and besides, this seemed the only thing she would have time to do; for this active, mature little mind had so outgrown the misshapen body that she realized with a woman's perception, at last, the fact, no longer a bitter one, that she would not be there much longer. We say no longer a bitter truth, for, strange as it may seem, whether simply through a merciful physical dulling of the sense of fear, or through an utter weariness and longing to be rid of the pain, Princess Sara looked forward to the going away only with a feeling of wonder. The thought of Katie, indeed, brought grief; but it was on Katie's account; she would be so lonesome, and maybe Aunt Abby Ann would send her to the asylum,—poor, shy little Katie; yes, it would be harder for her. If only the King would let her find Katie's mother, then she would herself feel that she was really His daughter, and that He had accepted the work begun “in His name.” She looked out of the window up into the clear, blue



sky. It was winter now, and the gorgeous maple had lost its shining dress; but some of the little leaves still clung to the willow, and even the bare branches tossed and bent their lofty heads with an indescribably restful motion.

"They rock like a cradle," Sallie thought; "how I'd like to be in their arms!" And soothed by the willowy waving, she fell asleep, and did not wake till Katie came. Then she looked up brightly.

"How do you do, princess?" she said, with a smile. "Was the walk pleasant to-day? Did you find many people to give the flowers to?"

"Yes, they're all gone," Katie answered, showing the empty basket; "and I heard some news; they say the King is coming. Christmas will be here in three weeks."

"We must get the palace ready," Sallie remarked; "the marble floors are in bad shape, and we need new couches."

Katie sat down on the floor, and laid her head beside Sallie; the little wasted hand buried itself in the yellow, fluffy hair, and Sallie said:—

"What a lot of gold you've got, princess! It's your only fortune, but they can't take it



from you. Tell me, Katie," she said, more seriously, "have you ever seen anybody you thought might belong to you?"

Katie shook her head. "I've seen lots I hoped might, — ladies with velvet clothes and soft furs who go along with little children and call them 'my dear.'"

The desire that persistently showed itself in this child, brought up in rags, for purple and fine linen, seemed to be a birthright.

"Katie, I'm going to tell you something. I meant to have kept it a secret; but I want you to know in case I should n't be — in case I should be too sick to tell;" she changed the words as she caught Katie's look of distress. "I'm going to find your mother;" and she told of the paper messages that Katie had unconsciously sent out. "Now you know why I wanted to know who bought 'em. Has anybody lately, that you think might be your mother?"

Katie shook her head, her lip quivered, and the black eyes were full of tears.

"I don't want to find her," she said, tremblingly; "I don't want anybody but you, and I won't leave you;" and the delicate body was



shaken with sobs from her feet to the crown of her golden head.

"I may leave you," Sallie said quietly. "Listen, Katie, that's why I did it; I don't want to leave you all alone all the days, and if we can find your mother you won't miss me so much."

"I don't want to," Katie persisted.

"You'd like the nice things," Sallie insinuated; "just think, Katie, you would n't have to pretend; you'd have the soft clothes and good things to eat, and warm blankets, and it would be like a princess all the time."

"But you —" Katie stammered; she could n't realize happiness apart from Sallie, and wondered that Sallie could think it possible.

"Did n't you tell me I was a 'Daughter of the King?'" Sallie asked, touching the little cross, whose purple ribbon contrasted so queerly with Katie's old dress. "You know it says in that book that when the daughter went to the King she was brought with gladness and rejoicing."

"You'll see the King first," Katie said. Then realizing what she had admitted, turned crim-



son in her effort to stop the tears that hurt Sallie.

“See that big tree,” the latter said, her mind wandering from their talk. “Watch those top branches; see, now, how they bend; they come almost down here, then they draw back as if they laughed and said, ‘You can’t touch us yet; don’t you wish you could?’ See how near they come; they toss all up together as if they were having such a gay time and wanted me to come. They come nearer and nearer, and some day I think they’ll put their arms right round me and catch me up; they are the ‘tendants in the palace, Katie, and see, they are beginning to light the lamps.’”



## CHAPTER IV.

A FEW days after this Sallie became so weak that Aunt Abby Ann called a doctor, and stayed at home herself. He was a busy man, and much practice among the poor had accustomed him to all kinds of suffering. Katie dared not stay in the room. She looked upon him as the arbiter of Sallie's fate, and hid away in dread; but as she went into the hall she heard him say to Aunt Abby Ann:—

“I don't say but that she will recover if she can have plenty of nourishing food and constant stimulants,—wine and brandy, you know.”

Aunt Abby Ann laughed grimly. “I don't see where they 're coming from,” she said; “it's all I can do to get bread and broth.”

Katie, an unwilling listener on the other side of the wall, felt that her heart would break. Wine and proper food might save Sallie's life, and she could not have them. She buried her



head in the bedclothes, and clenched her little hands; hot tears of angry grief burnt her eyes.

"She shall have it," the child cried to herself; "I'll do something; I'll do anything in the world to get Sallie what she wants."

A feeling of impotence succeeded her burst of anger. A hundred schemes came to her mind, but all seemed equally futile. At last she thought, —

"Christmas will be here soon; I'll find those girls and tell them about Sallie, and if they really want to do something 'in His name,' they'll be glad to help her, I know."

She felt partly comforted; but the sting was there. The doctor's words had confirmed the haunting fear, and in the depths of her heart she felt that Sallie would not long need her care.

After this a little change appeared in the quiet household. Aunt Abby Ann spent as much of her time at home as she could. Sallie no longer made the paper flowers, and Katie did not go out as much as formerly. Every moment she could spare from Sallie's couch she spent hard at work on the skirt; and such a



queer piece of handiwork as the unaccustomed fingers made of it! Guided only by her desire to make it "wrought with gold," and by the glimpse she had had of Aunt Abby Ann's method of working, Katie laid several strands of the golden floss along the hem of the garment, and proceeded to hold them in place by couching them with single threads. At first she attempted fantastic curls and loops; but finding that her silk would not last, she economized by following a straight line along the bottom. Even then she found that the material was giving out, — everything worked against this poor "Daughter of the King;" but just as she despairingly selected the last thread of silk (the "pattern" was only half completed) a bright idea came to her from the tangle of gold hanging over her eyes: "Sallie always calls my hair gold; I'll work with that." She took the scissors, and carefully selecting the longest locks, cut as close to her head as possible, and soon a mass of the shining stuff lay before her. It was so fine and brittle that Katie could scarcely use it; it would break off in the needle, and the work was so slow that she despaired of



finishing it by Christmas; but love works miracles, and a day or two before that time the quaint little skirt, fashioned with so much toil, and bearing traces of tears in sundry grimy stitches, was laid carefully away, gay with its glittering border of gold that had been purchased at so high a price.

With the exception of three or four bunches, the last of the flowers had been sold; these Katie had carefully reserved; they were her last resort, the means whereby she hoped to gain the sympathy and the more tangible help that would serve to prolong Sallie's life. All the pennies that the flowers had brought thus far had gone only too quickly for the broth and medicine that both Katie and Aunt Abby Ann had tacitly decided Sallie should have, if they went without food themselves. The doctor came frequently, giving his services out of his busy life, and furnishing several little comforts that otherwise would have been lacking; but in spite of this the weary little body on the couch grew thinner every day; the hands, once so diligent, became quieter and quieter, and nothing seemed like Sallie of old, save the busy



brain and bright eyes. Her faith that Katie's mother would come seemed to increase daily; Aunt Abby Ann, to whom it had been confided, dared not disturb the confidence in what to her was such a vain effort, and as the days went on it became evident that the longing to see the accomplishment of her work did much to keep alive this "Daughter of the King."

It was Christmas eve, and very cold. Katie shivered as she put a worn old coat over her thin dress, and tried vainly to keep the ragged buttonholes fastened about the buttons. In her tiny bare hands (the money that would have bought mittens had gone for Sallie long ago) she took the last bunches of the gay paper roses, with their precious messages buried in their unfeeling hearts, and with a good-by kiss to Sallie, dozing in the twilight, set off courageously on her mission. She had found out that the mission that she attended those two Sundays was to have its Christmas festival that night, at the big church two miles across the city. In spite of the fact that much of her life had had to be passed on the streets, she had never overcome her dread of dark and loneli-



ness ; but now she plunged bravely into the hurrying crowd, in the fast gathering dusk. The child was a striking figure at any time ; the exquisite grace of every motion and the golden veil of hair standing out raggedly from its recent ruthless clipping under the confines of the old gray hood drawn tightly over her head, attracted the gaze of many passers-by. The wind blew her over the icy pavement ; it threatened to tear the delicate flowers from her painful grasp ; it blew the tangle of hair into her eyes, and made her white cheeks rosy with its stinging blows. It seemed to her that the way had never been so long or cold before. At last she heard the joyous carols ringing out from the chimes of the church tower ; now the many-colored lights streamed from the church windows ; warm and welcome they looked to the little child without. A moment more, and she stood inside the porch ; and as the partial warmth revived the half-frozen limbs, a great wave of shyness swept over her, and she realized all at once how hard an undertaking was hers. In the first place, would those girls be there ? and where could she find them in that vast place that



seemed to swallow up every child that passed through its doors? If only she might see Miss Winthrop, or even the girl that had first introduced her. Suppose Miss Winthrop had died and that other woman was there. In spite of her regal stateliness, the woman had exerted a strange fascination over Katie, and along with her fear went a corresponding longing to see once more the tall figure that looked so like a princess, and had such sorrowful eyes.

A man standing near the inner door came to Katie.

“Would you like to go in?” he asked. “It’s the children’s service.”

Katie’s heart fluttered in her throat and choked her when she tried to answer yes; but her grateful face was enough, and the usher kindly opened the door and pointed to a vacant seat near by.

A brisk, middle-aged woman stepped forward and looked at Katie with disapprobation.

“What class does she belong to?” she asked the usher in an audible undertone. “I don’t recognize her,—and she must n’t have those ridiculous paper flowers in her hand, either;



Let me have your flowers, little girl," she said, stretching out her hand to take the innocent papers, "and I'll take care of them for you."

Katie trembled from head to foot. Despair lent her voice, and she said, piteously, —

"Oh, no, ma'am! I want 'em for something special; please don't take 'em." The big black eyes were full of terror.

"Very well, then, child," the woman said; "only keep them down behind the pew." Then she added to herself, "Who can she be? I've surely seen somebody who looks like her."

Thus rebuffed, Katie slipped into the first vacant pew, and tried to look about her. She might as well have been miles away, she could see so little; and after trying to stop the nervous trembling that the cold and the rebuke had produced, she slipped out of the seat and wandered down the long aisle, her ragged shoes scuffling over the rich carpet, till she came to a pew empty among a lot occupied by children.



## CHAPTER V.

“P’RAPS if I sit here I can see ’em,” she thought, and crept in, carefully closing the door, and climbing upon the seat. Her head, with its gray woollen covering surrounded by the halo of glistening hair, came just above the back of the seat. Her black eyes gazed out between the golden mass above and the paper roses below with an anxious, wistful expression. Her cold, red hands clasped the bunch of flowers, and her feet swung in their clumsy covering below, — such a queer little figure, upon whom in her cheerless home so much depended! A buzz went on around her; the big tree, frosty with pop-corn, and bright with candles, and heavy with gifts, was the theme of conversation among the children.

“What do you s’pose you’ll get?” Katie heard one after another say, and the exclamations of delight, as new objects of beauty were



discovered, made a chorus all around. But not one did she see that she knew, — not one of the girls, not even Miss Winthrop nor the tall lady. What should she do? Just then a man stopped at the pew.

“You’ll have to move out of here, little girl,” he said; “this seat is reserved for a class.”

Katie rose in fright, and hurrying out stumbled over a high kneeling-stool, that tipped with a great noise. The children in front giggled.

“Look at the flowers,” she heard one say; “why don’t she put ’em in her hood?”

“Go around the corner,” the man said, not unkindly, “and you can hear and see just as well.”

Poor Katie, cut to the quick of her sensitive soul by the reference to her hated hood, blushed crimson. The tears scalded her eyes, and it seemed to her that every child she passed was laughing at her. The pitiful little figure crept up the long aisle with a wild desire to run out — away, anywhere, where she might find one friendly voice; but the thought of Sallie encouraged her, and turning the corner, she crawled into a seat adjoining the one she had



left, wishing with all her heart that the floor would open and swallow her up. At last she saw something that made her heart leap; directly in front, so that she could both see and hear them, were the very girls she had met two months ago; only, and Katie's heart fell again, neither of the ladies nor her girl friend was there. Could she have the courage to tell those girls about Sallie? They had seemed so careless of her those two days she had been one of them. She would listen, — yes, they were comparing notes. What had they done? One had saved all her five-cent pieces, and was going to give them to the fund to-night, — it was for the benefit of the schools in China; three laughingly found their aims had been the same: they had saved pennies which were to go for the education of the child-widows in India, — an object that had strongly appealed to their imaginations; one had not used a single word that bordered on the profane, and had done her best to prevent it in those around her; one had gone without candy, and had sent the money thus saved to the Orphan Asylum (Katie shuddered); two had joined forces and sewed for



the Indian Mission every half-holiday; and one, the smallest, whose thin white face showed the inevitable result of too early toil in the mills, could not be prevailed upon to tell what she had accomplished.

"I saved some money," she said, at last.

"What did you do with it?" the others asked.

"Nothing," the child answered, obstinately.

"I don't believe you saved it at all," one scoffingly said.

"Yes, she has, — I see it; it's a bill, too," another chimed in.

The child, one of whose blue eyes looked directly toward the other, turned upon the informant fiercely: —

"You don't know how much it is, and I sha'n't tell."

"Why not? What will you do with it, — give it to the 'China fund'?"

"No, I sha'n't; it's too far off; how do I know it'll ever get there?" the young cynic replied, half nodding, and shutting the straight eye cunningly, with grotesque effect.

Katie listened despairingly; how could she ever ask those sister donors to divert their gifts



from their ambitious channels to the humble needs of poor little Sallie? To them, so commonplace an appeal would have small chance beside the great charities to which their offerings were to be devoted. "P'raps somebody 'll buy the flowers, if nothing else," Katie thought, trying to fan her fainting courage.

But hark! the clergyman, dressed in spotless linen, had come in and begun to address the children, — the same one whom once before she had heard. Katie knew him by his heavy black whiskers and benevolent smile. He told the Christmas story of the coming of the King, — how once coming as a baby, as we all come into the world, He had so glorified His kingly life that His birthday was never passed by, but was celebrated, especially by the children whom He so dearly loved. He referred to the children's gift to the little children in China; spoke of the value in God's sight of any offering that was destined to give knowledge of Him, and congratulated the children that the sum of money on this occasion was the largest missionary fund ever sent out by any of the young people connected with this church.



The children sang some carols, the presents were given out. Katie felt that the time to go was fast approaching. Indeed, the benediction was pronounced, and the children were starting, before she had quite resolved what to do. The girls were passing by her, and the opportunity with them; one of them recognized and nodded to her. She put out her hand beseechingly.

"Oh, please!" she said; "you are a 'Daughter of the King,' are n't you?" and she touched her silver cross.

"Yes," said the other, with a bright smile; "here's mine," and she pulled it out of her dress. "Why?"

"'Cos — 'cos there's one, at least there's one without the cross, very sick at home, and she needs wine and things that the people — we — are too poor to get; I thought maybe if the other 'Daughters of the King' knew about it they'd be glad to help."

The girl shook her head slowly.

"I've given away all my money," she said; "I'm sorry. Isn't there somebody else you can go to?"

"I don't know," Katie said, sorrowfully. "I



thought maybe the 'Daughters of the King' would be glad to help one of their own kind. Could you?" she said, with a great effort, turning to another who stood listening.

"You'll have to go to the city missionary, I'm 'fraid," this one said; "I've spent all my money, or I'd give something. If Miss Winthrop was n't too sick she'd help," she added, seeing the disappointment in Katie's face; "but she is n't out yet. Come, Nell, you won't get your stocking hung to-night," and with a nod they hurried off.

Katie lingered a moment irresolutely. The pleasant odor of the pines, the genial warmth of the fires, the brilliant lights, and the soft, sweet music were almost too much for the sensitive little creature. The bells pealed out a merry carol overhead, the groups of happy people moved about, talking in happy voices. Katie, alone in the big pew, looked about her, and then down at the poor paper roses tumbled against her faithful breast. Even now she saw Sallie's thin hands working at the unruly petals; even now she heard the weak voice saying: "If they'll only bring your mother, Katie, and I



know they will." Christmas had come, they had n't brought her mother, and there seemed nobody in the wide world willing to contribute out of abundance to Sallie's needs. Suppose Sallie should not be there when she got back; suppose the princess should have been carried to the King, what would she, Katie, do? A great big sob, too big to keep to herself, burst unconsciously from her lips.

A sweet-faced lady with white hair, standing near, turned quickly at the sound. She saw a tiny figure in a gray hood and ragged cloak standing at a pew door, — a tiny, shivering child whose little golden head was laid down on the arm of the seat in the attitude of complete despair.

"What is the trouble, dear?" she asked, going swiftly to the child and stooping beside her.

Katie lifted her head, pushed back her hair, and gazed at the speaker, her black eyes hard and bright with unshed tears.

"Where have I seen a face like that?" the woman instantly thought.

"You see, the girls that were here were 'Daughters of the King,' and I was one of 'em,



and I thought if I told 'em about Sallie they'd be glad to help 'in His name,' you know; but they have already given all their money away; I s'pose they are poor, too; but — Sallie, oh, Sallie!" and at the pitying look and sympathetic touch Katie broke down entirely, and wiped her eyes on the back of her chafed hands, trying vainly not to dampen the flowers.

"What about Sallie? Who is she?"

Once more Katie told her story, ending with the pathetic plea: —

"Don't you think somebody would be willing to help her? She's a 'Daughter of the King,' too."

"Dear child, yes," the good woman answered. "Of all nights in the year that help should be asked in vain, 'in His name'!"

"I've got the flowers to sell," Katie cried, eagerly, holding up the wilted collection; "but they don't look pretty now."

"Never mind. Did Sallie make them?" the lady asked, kindly; she was strangely drawn to this waif, apart from her pathetic appeal.

"You can let me have these to-night; I'll pay you well for them; there's much work and



good work, too, in them; and to-morrow we'll see what we can do for little Sallie."

Then she took the child by the hand and led her out of the church. Close behind them walked the "Daughter of the King" who had refused to tell the others about her gift. Linger- ing, she had heard Katie's appeal, and seen her grief, and its dissipation at the words of the friendly woman. Out in the porch they paused; the child crept up to Katie, and pulled her coat shyly, fixing her eye upon her. Katie looked a little embarrassed; she could n't tell whether the child was looking at her or not. At the other's smile, however, her doubt vanished.

"Did you say she was sick?" the stranger asked.

Katie nodded.

"And poor?"

Katie nodded more vigorously.

The child's benevolent smile was sadly at odds with the mismatched blue eyes.

"Give her this, 'in His name,'" she said, showing her little silver cross, and putting a crisp bill in Katie's hand. Then she turned



and fled before Katie could say another word.

The lady, who had watched the little incident with a swelling heart, put Katie on a homeward-bound car, with her fare in one hand and in the other the liberal emolument for the flowers, the first installment of that which was, please God, to bring little Sallie to life and health again. The lady stepped back to the church. Her eyes were yet moist at the unselfish devotion of the "Daughter of the King;" but there was a smile on her face as she looked at the tissue frauds in her hand. "They look colder even than the real ones at this time of year," she thought. "Why, Mrs. LeRoy, how you startled me! That's the very face, — how like they are!" This she added to herself, as a tall, regal woman, in a black clinging gown, touched her arm suddenly. "What is it, can I do anything for you?" she asked, disturbed at the changed expression of the cold, calm face that she had rarely seen moved in years of intimate acquaintance.

"Not much, thanks," the other said, and laughed, as if half ashamed. "I have a foolish



fancy; won't you tell me the name of that child you were speaking to? Her face was striking," she hesitated — "I've seen her before."

"I really don't know her name; she only told me where she lived, she was so wrapt up in a little lame girl dying for want of proper nourishment, — Sallie, she called her."

"It must be the same one," Mrs. Le Roy answered; "I saw her once when I took Miss Winthrop's class in the mission. She was very much interested in the child, and asked me so many questions about her that I was ashamed to confess I had made no inquiries. She is a strange-looking little girl," she said, reverting to Katie. "Where did you say she lived?" Then without waiting for an answer, "She looked almost too delicate and finely formed to be one of the mission children."

It was evident Mrs. Le Roy felt an interest on her own account, as well as Miss Winthrop's. The elder lady pressed her friend's hand with the privilege born of old acquaintance.

"My dear, here is a chance for you to help some one; the case needs investigating, at least; it may prove worthy, and it is Christmas-tide —



was there ever a better time to do good? Here, take these, they'll serve to remind you of the child;" and she put the roses, half in jest, into her friend's unwilling hand. The woman's dark eyes grew cold.

"I never keep festivals, you know; I only strayed here to-night; Christmas is nothing to me. It's not alone the poor and sick who suffer."

Her face was as frosty as the air without. She put up her hand to fasten her furs about her throat, and a tiny Maltese cross that gleamed like silver escaped from its hiding-place in her dress.

"Why, are you a 'Daughter of the King'?" the other asked, with surprise; "that poor little child was one, and made her plea 'in His name.'"

Mrs. Le Roy's lips trembled.

"That cross—it was my baby's," she said. "Good-night;" and putting up her hand as if to ward off sympathy or question, she hurried down the step and into her carriage.



## CHAPTER V.

CHRISTMAS morning dawned bright and clear. In the dainty boudoir of a great city mansion, surrounded by luxurious appointments, sat a tall, pale woman, wrapt in the long black garments that were in truth the outward expression of the spirit of heaviness that enveloped her. Her life had been strange, — a living death, she would have told you. Nine years before a happy young wife and mother, she had lost, in one terrible day, both the husband and baby that made all her pride and happiness. When they told her her husband had died in the vain effort to rescue their baby from his burning home, she was like a mad creature, and begged piteously to die herself. As no trace of the child was to be found, she for a long time refused to believe in its death; but as it was known to have been in an upper room at the time of the fire, gradually she felt



the impossibility of its escape from the father's fate, and relinquished her forlorn hope; not in resignation, but in an enforced submission, bitter and rebellious. From a sunny, winsome girl, she became a cold, impassive woman through the outbursts of grief and despair that seemed to exhaust the sense of feeling, and leave her totally indifferent to all around her. Still young, rich, and talented, she moved, a regal figure, proudly beautiful, like a mechanical thing from day to day. Old friends clung to her through pity or association, new ones she rarely made; yet many enjoyments might still have been hers (there are those independent of the happiness that comes solely through love of husband or child), and some women in her place would have adapted themselves to the new life, and found satisfaction and pleasure in the means of enjoyment left them.

Many a young girl envied Katherine Le Roy her wealth and position; many friends longed to excite in her the true source of comfort,—the power of living and doing for others; but the woman resolutely steeled her heart against pleas of this sort. If those girls who envied




her only knew how gladly she would throw aside money, position, — ay, everything that makes life easy, — for one touch of her baby's hand. Waiting and longing had almost made her mad in the first few years, and she yielded at last to friends' persuasions, and tried to distract her mind ; but it seemed indeed as if her power to feel had gone, until, one day, something had stirred to a tiny spark of life the heart she thought was dead. It was such a little thing, and the little spark of life hurt so much that she tried to quench it and forget the cause, but it was too late ; the child she had seen when she unwillingly supplied her friend's place for one day, had excited an unconscious fascination. Her baby's eyes had gazed into hers with just that wondering appeal ; the golden locks, though darker, recalled the tight little curls, like twisted gold, that covered her baby's head. The child seemed just the age that hers would have been, too. All these things stirred again the old doubts ; suppose her child had escaped the fire and grown up, horrible to think of, in poverty and hardship ! She had to go over all the old reasons



again and again before she could tranquillize her mind, so great was the impression made by the little girl who had come and gone in her life like the flash of a meteor. And now, just as the wounded place had healed, she had seen her again, this time in distress. All night long had Mrs. Le Roy tossed in wakefulness, seeing before her heads like cherubs with golden halos; but they all had the same face, the face of the "Daughter of the King."

Who was this child that disturbed her so? Why must other people's troubles be thrust upon her? had she not enough of her own? God forgive her! — buried in her own sorrow, she had forgotten that others might be worse off than she. How horrible to think that a life could be lost through lack of money, and that the child who looked up with her baby's eyes could feel a grief so hard as that. Suppose her child had lived and been brought to such a pass. It was too dreadful to think of. For once, at least, she would try to do for some one what she would have had done for her own child. It was Christmas day, — a good time to begin; her friend's words came to her, and she ob-





stinately thought, "I'll not keep on hunting up the poor; I hate that rôle, and it's only for this one time, because she looked like my baby, oh, my baby!" and the mother's heart again glowed, stirred to life by the memory of the golden-haired child. Unconsciously she fingered the little Maltese cross that hung on her watch chain. K. Le R. was on it in quaint lettering. Her baby often had worn it, and it never left her own bosom. Her little Katie, —yes, at least to-day she would do one good thing in her name, and she started at the recollection of the child's cross that she had noticed, with the higher watch-word "In His Name."

Hastily rising, she ordered several bottles of wine, some fruit, and other dainties, put in a basket; then going to a long-closed drawer, she took out some little garments yellow with their nine years' seclusion.

"The lame child may be little and needy," she said to herself, as if apologizing, and I'm doing this for Katie. Now where shall I go?" she went on, with a delicate flush on her pale cheek that her unusual activity had produced. "Dear, dear, I've forgotten the address, and



shall have to go to Mrs. Sidney for it; how provoking!" For the good that was in her was battling hard with the obstinate self-indulgence in grief she had allowed, and she hated to confess that she had adopted her friend's plan. As she stood hesitating, her eye fell on the paper roses lying on her table.

"Poor little child! to think she must rely on those pathetic caricatures for help," she said, with unconscious meaning. She took them up to throw them away, and the movement detached one of the crumpled white petals, and caused it to flutter down upon the floor. Mrs. Le Roy stooped to get it; when she lifted her face it was ashen, and her eyes looked with terror on the rose petal in her hand. "K. Le R.," the same letters that were on her cross. Involuntarily her other hand grasped that; like one in a dream she compared the two. Line for line they were alike. Was she dreaming? was she sane?

"What does it mean?" she gasped, sinking down upon her couch, and spreading out the paper petal.

Ah, little Sallie, true "Daughter of the King,"



in your unquestioning, filial faith; the message that older heads would have scorned to trust to such uncertain ways, confidingly sent in sweet assurance that the King would guide the work begun "in His name," went straight through the crowds of the great city to the one woman whose need of it had been so great. For a while that woman was as one dazed. She could not grasp the meaning. How could any one know of that lettering save one who knew of her baby, whose dainty apparel was all so marked? And if they knew of her, it was possible that she yet lived, — but no more the baby she had lost. Suddenly the child who had brought the flowers came like an inspiration to her mind. Could it be possible? was that the fascination she had always found in her? were those dark eyes the same that had looked years before into hers? was that golden head the one she had nightly pillowed on her breast? Why did she stop to conjecture? Up! up! let her go at once, and see if that were indeed her baby whose message she saw before her. In a fever of impatience she hurried to her carriage, almost forgetting the big basket she had been so inter-



ested in a few moments before. Giving the direction she had found beneath the letters, she leaned back out of observation and tried to control the violent trembling that had seized every limb. How and where should she find her? The child had shown every mark of poverty and sorrow; had she been ill-treated? The blood surged in the woman's face at the thought of that and of the long-lost years.

Poorer and poorer grew the neighborhood. Dreading what she might find, she nevertheless sat upright now and gazed about her. A sense of relief came as they stopped at the door of a new and comparatively comfortable dwelling-house. Her coachman looked at her with well-bred surprise as she refused his help with the basket. She would go alone.

"Can you tell me if a lame child lives here, and — and another with her?" she asked of an Irish woman at the outer door. "They make paper flowers, I think," she went on, embarrassed at the paucity of her knowledge.

"Yis, the third flight above, mum," the woman replied; "and it's glad I am ye've come," eyeing the basket critically, "though it's



too late to do much for the creepie, I'm thinkin'."

Hastily thanking her, Mrs. Le Roy went up the straight, narrow stairs, and turning, went up another flight. There she paused; a feeling of suffocation assailed her. She put her hand to her bosom to stop its throbbing, and the little cross slipped out. Had her child trod that hard and narrow path every day, while her less tender feet had fallen on soft coverings? Had her baby been brought up in these cold and bare rooms, while she had passed the long hours in loveless luxury? It was horrible, and the worst of it was that (if it were true) she might have known it sooner, perhaps, had she not wilfully shut herself up from contact with the poor. She heard voices just then, and stepping softly to a door just ajar, looked in to what, if she could only have known it, was a palace, royal with the presence of the King.

Under the window lay Sallie, her eyes bright with the struggle just beginning between the wasted body and the vigorous soul. Kneeling beside her, with one arm about her head, was Katie. The child was holding a glass of wine



in her hand, coaxing Sallie to take "just one little drop."

"Why, Sallie," Mrs. Le Roy heard her say, "the doctor said you'd be better if you only had the wine, and now you've got it; and some more good things coming to-day, — the lady said so."

"I can't, Katie" (Mrs. Le Roy, outside, with difficulty restrained a cry; it must be her Katie), "it hurts me so to swallow. This is better than all the rest;" and she touched softly a little white skirt thrown across the bed, whose border was gay with golden threads.

"Do you like it? I'm so glad; it was all I could think of to do. Don't you b'lieve the King will like it just as well as if I'd done something for the heathen?"

"Yes, I do," Sallie said, softly. "I'll tell Him, anyway. We did the best we could; if He'd only send your mother, Katie, I'd know we were His daughters."

Mrs. Le Roy stepped forward, impetuously; but stopped a moment longer, for Aunt Abby Ann appeared, and tried, in a wonderfully soft voice, to persuade Sallie to take a little wine.



"No, I can't," the child said; "don't worry; I don't have the pain if I keep still."

The hard-faced woman looked at her a moment, touched the little skirt softly, and then hurried from the room.

"Read about the King, princess," said Sallie; "I think he's coming to-day; it's Christmas, you know."

Katie brought the big book, and, propping it up, read more easily than at the first time the words familiar now to them both.

" 'The King's daughter is all glorious within: her clothing is of wrought gold.' "

Sallie looked up and smiled brightly.

"It is, you know, really now;" and she patted the gay border.

" 'She shall be brought to the King in raiment of needle-work.' "

Mrs. Le Roy could wait no longer; tapping gently, she stepped in, and said in a low, sweet voice, —

"Are these the little girls that make the flowers?"

Katie looked up with mingled fear and delight. The tall, proud lady with the sorrowful



eyes, but they were not sorrowful now; they looked straight into Katie's black ones as if they would never let her out of their gaze. Sallie raised herself on her elbow, her face illumined with happiness. Aunt Abby Ann came to the inner door and stopped, amazed at the strange scene.

"Yes, I make the flowers," Sallie said, quickly. "Did — did you find the letters? Did you ever lose a little girl?"

"How did you come by those letters? what does it mean?" Mrs. Le Roy asked, hoarsely.

Katie shrank back, frightened; but the princess, making a great effort, said: —

"My mother found Katie, one night, in the street. She tried to find her folks, but could n't. Katie had those letters on all her clo'es. I thought they'd find her mother. Katie, they did, they did! you and I are the 'Daughters of the King' — He *did* like our work! Why, see, Katie, she's one, too," pointing to the little cross that hung from Mrs. Le Roy's dress. It showed only for a moment, for the tall, queenly woman had fallen on her knees beside Katie, holding out her arms, with such a pleading look



in her eyes that the child, losing the last bit of fear, yielded to the fascination of the mother-love, and laid her golden head softly upon her mother's breast.

Little Sallie leaned back on her pillows with a long sigh. She was perfectly satisfied; why, then, did she have to turn away her head to hide the big tears that came when Katie was wrapt in loving arms?

"It must be nice to find a mother," Sallie thought; "maybe I shall find mine before long;" and she turned unconsciously to her old friend, the willow, gently waving its branches toward the window.

"At any rate I shall find the King. I wonder who He'll send to bring me. 'With gladness and rejoicing shall they be brought.'"

She was so still that the others did not notice her for a moment. Mrs. Le Roy turned, with a mother's gratitude, to the woman who had cared for her child; but Katie's clinging arm detained her.

"I can't leave Sallie," she said; "you'd never have found me if it had n't been for her."



The woman strained the child to her, and turned with a smile to the couch.

"Sallie shall never lack anything again, my darling," she said.

Indeed she would not. The willows stooped lower and lower.

"The 'tendants are coming, — look, Katie! they're quite here," said Sallie, stretching out her arms.

Lower and lower yet, with a restful, waving, beckoning motion, the topmost limbs finally brushed against the window-pane. Sallie's hands dropped quietly. The "Daughter of the King," all glorious within, and clad in garments of wrought gold, had entered with gladness into His palace.

THE END.























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